

stay here forever by ninwrites

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Summary:

Richie points towards the mistletoe above his head. "You could just come and kiss me because it's been days and I'm so Eddie-starved I think I might waste away right where I stand."

"I could just let you perish." Eddie shrugs. "Save me the divorce papers."

Richie shakes his head. "You'd miss me. I'm awesome."

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Author's Note:

- For [ArtistMow](#).

based on the [prompt](#) "what no i totally have no idea how mistletoe got under every doorway in our house... *cough cough* ...but since it's there we should really honor the tradition right"

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title from 'mixtape for christmas' by hey monday // this is for mary, who deserves all of the good things.

Eddie lets his duffel bag fall to the floor, shutting the door behind him with his elbow as he strains his neck looking up.

“Fucking mistletoe.” He shakes his head. “It’s the first of December. We haven’t even put the fucking tree up yet.”

The lack of obnoxious exclamations, and/or full-force of his 200-pound over-excited puppy of a husband should be a warning sign, but Eddie is coming off a thirty hour shift at the hospital, and he’s tired and he’s already almost snapped at ten different doctors today because they insisted on asking stupid questions and doubting his expertise even though he’s a senior nurse, and he doesn’t have the energy to put towards questioning what stupid, if well-intended, thing that Richie has done now.

Last week, he’d attempted to iron all of Eddie’s shirts, only to burn a hole through three of them. A month before, he’d stained Eddie’s best, fancy guest towels with bleach because he’d tried to clean the

bathroom after hearing Eddie offhandedly mention his intentions to do such when he had some time off. It's surprisingly difficult to remain angry with Richie when he just *stares* with his big blue eyes and his bottom lip juts out because he may be a little hopeless sometimes but he tries harder than anybody Eddie has ever met before.

Besides, it's not like Eddie didn't know what he was getting into.

"Richie?" Eddie calls out, staring at the bag at his feet for a full ten seconds before sighing and picking it up anyway. "I swear to God if you're hiding out because you've flooded the kitchen or something, I will kill you, and you and I both know that *nobody* will find the body. I get that you think you're helping and that's sweet or whatever but I did not pay an extortionate amount of money for you to fuck up the tiles in your attempt to - oh. You've got to be fucking kidding me."

There's another sprig of mistletoe in the kitchen doorway, and above the back door, and if he turns his head just right he can see one taped to the door frame of the hall. Eddie is, reasonably he feels, reluctant to go through to any other rooms, because he's almost certain of what he's going to find, but if he doesn't then he won't know and that's worse.

"Richard Tozier-Kaspbrak." Eddie shakes his head, trudging through the hall. There's a sprig of mistletoe taped above the doorways of the first floor bathroom, both guestrooms, and the *nursery*, for fuck's sake.

The same can be said for the pictures hanging on the wall next to the staircase - it's an improvement on the selfie Richie took at the nurse's desk of Eddie's first week, that much can at least be said - and the

door frames of the upstairs bathroom, office, master bedroom and, Eddie thinks he can safely bet, the en-suite.

He doesn't get a chance to check, as the office door swings open as soon as he reaches the top of the stairs. Richie, to put it kindly, looks like a mess. His hair is erratic, he's wearing an old *TRASHMOUTH* tour shirt from 2006, plaid pyjama pants with bare feet and he hasn't shaved. If Eddie didn't know better he'd assume that Richie had just woken up, but in truth this is just how he'd left Richie yesterday, promising to take the rubbish out after Eddie had made them both brunch before he headed off to work.

"Eddie Spaghetti!" Richie exclaims, his cheeks pink. "You're home early."

Eddie frowns, double-checking his fob watch, before glancing back up at Richie. "Do you have a concussion? Like, seriously, Richie? I've just done 30 hours and you think that I'm *early* ? If you were anybody else I'd think this was guilt manifesting, that you'd have a sexy hunk hiding in your closet or something but you look like something that belongs in a landfill right now, so I know that can't be it. You wouldn't even attract a skunk."

Richie grins, batting his eyelashes, his hands curled up beneath his chin. "How could I have a sexy hunk hiding in my closet when he's standing right in front of me?"

Eddie rolls his eyes, but there's a tiny pull at the corner of his mouth. "Flirt all you want, I'm still going to ask about the mistletoe."

“These old things?” Richie glances up, as though noticing them for the first time. “Why, I have no idea how they got there. Must be a Christmas miracle. Good old Saint Nick himself giving me the greatest gift I could ever ask for.”

Eddie puts his bag down, folding his arms across his chest. “You know, I think *Saint Nick* got his plants mixed up. This looks a lot more like poison ivy to me Horrible stuff. Remember that time you pissed Stan off so much that he shoved some down your pants? Good times.”

Richie shudders, hands creeping towards his ass. “Not for me, my balls burned for a month.”

“That’s not a mental image I needed, but thanks, Rich.”

Richie, in an attempt to be discreet, puts his hands on his hips instead. He purses his lips, staring up at the mistletoe the way someone who has never been into a gallery might stare at a painting. “Methinks you might be mistaken, my little spaghetti.”

Eddie’s mouth flattens into a thin line. “Is that so?”

Richie hums, reaching up to poke the mistletoe. “This is definitely not poison ivy, no sir, why I’d recognise that easily. I was traumatised by Stan the Man, you see, that summer when he attacked me. This, sweet Eds, love of my life, future father to my child-“

“Last time I checked you’re not the one giving birth.”

Richie continues, with only a slight wave of his hand to indicate he’d even heard Eddie. “Beacon of all that is good and cute in my life, my very dearest husband for almost thirty years-“

“Pretty sure that Bill wasn’t ordained when we were seven.”

“This,” Richie puffs his chest, looking back at Eddie with a daring glint in his eyes. “Is nothing more than simple mistletoe.”

Eddie stares, deadpan. “And that’s your professional opinion?”

Richie nods eagerly. “Oh, absolutely. I’m clearly a botanist.” Richie waves his hand down his body. There’s a splatter of what Eddie seriously hopes is pasta sauce on the knee of his pants, and a fairly sizeable hole in the hem of his shirt.

“You’re clearly an idiot.” Eddie corrects. Richie just grins as though he’s just heard he’s won a million dollars.

“Perhaps.” He concedes. “But with this ring on my finger and Kaspbrak as my name, I’m *your* idiot.”

“I wonder if Stan knows any good divorce lawyers.” Eddie ponders, hand to his chin.

Richie scoffs. He's still grinning like an idiot. Like an adorable, ridiculous, wonderful fool of a man. "As if you could give up all of this. I'm hot stuff, Eds. Just ask your mom, she never could get enough of me. Sometimes I'd have to sneak into your bedroom just so you wouldn't get suspicious, but as soon as you were asleep, it was time for Mrs K and the all-you-can-eat-Tozier buffet."

"My mother is dead, asshole."

Richie crosses himself. "Long may she rest in peace."

Eddie clears his throat. "Seriously, what is with all of the mistletoe? Are you planning on making your own forty-questions video? Because that didn't work out so well last time, it might be better to just wait until you're famous enough for Vogue to give a shit."

"Oh, please, Eduardo." Richie actually, genuinely pouts. "I'm just a poor man, stop the teasing."

"What teasing?" Eddie asks, the picture of innocence.

Richie still hasn't moved. His determination delights the thirteen year old inside Eddie, who used to pick fights over whose turn it was to share the hammock because it meant he had Richie's attention, wholly and completely in a way he couldn't explain but yearned for nonetheless, for at least five minutes before Stan would kick them both off, claiming it for himself under the sacred guild of peace and quiet.

“It’s *mistletoe* .” Richie stresses. “Are you really going to deny such a sacred, beautiful tradition?”

“Depends.” Eddie raises an eyebrow. “Are you going to tell me who put them up?”

Richie squints, making his glasses look even bigger. “Would you believe me if I said it was done by a magical mistletoe fairy?”

“Does the magical mistletoe fairy look suspiciously like a scruffy comedian who hasn’t showered since I left almost two days ago?”

“Certainly couldn’t be *this* scruffy comedian,” Richie points at himself with two thumbs. “He had a shower an hour ago.”

Eddie frowns. “How ... how do you not look any fucking different? You literally look like you just rolled out of bed, did you dry yourself with your fucking pillow or something?”

“Oh Eds, you say the sweetest things.” Richie swoons.

“I’m not insulting myself, here, Richard, I have great fucking taste, but it’s a matter of facts that there is no way you could gain such specific gravity with your hair without sticking a fork into an electric socket.”

Richie runs his hands through his hair. It doesn't change anything. "I tried using that fancy mousse stuff you have, the gooey stuff that looks like spunk but smells like lemon, but I don't think that I did it properly. I tried following the instructions but the writing is so small, even with my glasses on you'd need a fucking microscope just to see the ingredient list."

"You used my mousse?" Eddie shouldn't be charmed by that. They've been married since they were eighteen. He's not a teenager anymore. His knees should not go weak at the thought that Richie tried to do his hair with Eddie's mousse, after never showing any interest himself in even the concept of hair products.

"I wanted to make my hair look nice. I was going to try and make dinner, too, but then I thought that the sweetness of the gesture might be lost if you came home to a burnt kitchen, and you definitely would be too angry for kitchen sex which was at least 25% of the point, so I booked us a table at that overpriced vegan place you love, and I was going to look so nice that you couldn't help but fall to your knees as soon as you walked through the door, bu..."

Oh. Eddie blinks. "But I'm early."

Richie's grin is crooked and a little toothy and so sweet that Eddie feels thirty-seven and sixteen and ten all at once. "Not that I'm complaining. It's always better to have you around than to miss you. The Eddie in my head is never quite witty enough to compare with the real thing, although both of you are quite vocal, and seem to have an opinion about *everything*."

"What time are the reservations?"

Richie brightens. “Not until nine - they’re open until midnight, but I thought you might want a quick nap before we go. I know their broccoli soup is nice but I don’t think it’s made for facials, you know?”

“I don’t know whether I should think it’s sweet that you considered I might want a nap or whether I should shove your face into a cold bowl of soup just for the fun of it.”

Richie points towards the mistletoe above his head. “You could just come and kiss me because it’s been days and I’m so Eddie-starved I think I might waste away right where I stand.”

‘I could just let you perish.’ Eddie shrugs. “Save me the divorce papers.”

Richie shakes his head. “You’d miss me. I’m awesome.”

“You’re a dork.” Eddie declares, crossing the hall until he’s standing toe-to-toe with Richie. He loops his arms around Richie’s neck, leaning up until his chin bumps Richie’s. Richie’s hands fall to his hips, curling his fingers in the belt loops of Eddie’s slacks, his cheeks red with the force of his grin.

“Merry Christmas, Eds.”

Eddie sighs, pressing a kiss to the corner of Richie's mouth, his smile curving against Richie's own. "You're Jewish."

Richie squeezes Eddie's hips. "I'm a simple man, with simple needs. Who am I to deny tradition?"

Eddie nips at Richie's bottom lip. "You are going to take down every," a kiss to his left cheek, "single," a kiss to his right, "sprig of mistletoe."

"Am I?"

Eddie tugs at the static ends of Richie's hair. "I'm not doing it for you." He says, deep and throaty, drawing Richie in for a deep, toe-curling kiss, arching his body forward, letting Richie's hand slide up to flatten against his spine, pulling him in closer.

He waits, until Richie is huffing out warm moans beneath his breath, his hands twitching against Eddie's back, before pulling away and covering Richie's mouth with his hand.

"If you ever want me to kiss you like that again?" Eddie brushes his thumb across Richie's bottom lip. "You won't rely upon some kitschy plastic plant."

"It's tradition!" Richie protests.

“You don’t need tradition, fuckface.” Eddie promises, with much more heart than his words would imply. “You have a husband who loves you more than anyone else. Who always has, and always will. I don’t need mistletoe to kiss you, Rich. I just need you, and your stupid shirts and your oversized glasses and your stupid, wonderful face.”

Richie yanks Eddie forward, cupping his hands against Eddie’s face. “I love you,” he murmurs between kisses. “I fucking love you, Eddie, so fucking much. I’m the luckiest son of a bitch alive.”

“Just so long as you don’t forget it.” Eddie whispers against Richie’s mouth, which is to say - I, too, am the luckiest son of a bitch alive.

Author's Note:

september 2019: i enter the scary clown movie 2.0 only to find myself crying over the losers and their found family and the beautiful love story between these two dorks.

december 2019: i post my first reddie fic, fittingly, as a gift for my best friend.

if all goes well, this won't be the last. either way, i hope that you enjoyed this little old thing ♥

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this note is just for mary. it probably won't be of any interest to you if you are not her ♥

mary. my darling force sister. my absolute best friend. the very light of my life. surprise! this is both an early christmas present and a congratulations, to you, for completing your first semester of college!

that is an incredible feat, and I know the strength and heart and determination that it took to get here, and I just want you to know that I couldn't be prouder. you inspire me every single day. i cannot wait to see the wonderful things that you'll bring into the world. i lvoe tou.

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